THE SAINTS Solemne Covenant WITH THEIR GOD.

As it was opened in a Sermon preached at BECCLES in the Countie of Suffolk, at the taking of the Nationall Covenant there, by the Ministers and other Officers of that Division.

BY

IOH: BRINSLEY Minister of the Word at *Great Yarmouth.*

IER. 50. 5.

Come and let us joyne our selves unto the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant, that shall not be forgotten.

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To the much honoured,

Sir IOHN WENTWORTH, and Sir IOHN ROWSE

Knights: With the reſt of the Right Worſhipfull the Commiſsioners for the Countie of Suffolke,

Councell *and* Strength.

RIGHT WORSHIPFULL,

BY the *appointment*, and in the *preſence* of ſome of you was this *Sermon preached*. And at the like *requeſt* it is now *publiſhed* together with an addition of a *Supplement* to the *Applicatorie* part, which was then through ſtraitneſſe of time left imperfect. My ayme in both was, and is to promote the *publique ſervice* of the *Kingdome*, and in particular the ſervice of that *day*. If herein I have not done what haply ſome would have had me, by ſpeaking their *conceptions*, I would have them and the world know, I have done what I conceived moſt *expedient* for the promoting of the ſervice which then I was put upon, and (as far as I apprehend) the *great deſigne* of the Kingdome. That I have herein concealed my own *private judgement* in the point of *Church Government*, It is not becauſe I am *afraid* or *aſhamed* to give account of it, but only

that I might not by an *unseasonable anticipation* of the judgement of that *venerable Assembly* now convened for the deciding and stating of that controversie, both render my selfe *seemingly presumptious*, and lay blocks in my own way, by *sowing* of *scruples*, which my worke was to *remove* and *pull up*. What successe God was pleased to give unto my poore *labours* at that time, some of you are witnesses. My hopes are, that being not altogether *unsuccessefull* in the *hearing*, they may prove not wholy *unusefull* in the *reading*. Such as they are, I presume to put them into your *hands*, laying both them and my selfe at the *Churches feet*.

Whose I am, and ever shall be

JOH: BRINSLEY.

THE SAINTS SOLEMNE COVENANT.

PSAL. 50. 5.

Gather my Saints together unto me, those that have made a Covenant with me by sacrifice.

THe same *occasion* that hath this day brought you together in this *place*, hath also brought this *Text* to my *hand*. Wherein (as *Expositors* for the most part conceive of it) you have a generall *Citation*, or *Processe* issuing out of the *high Court of Heaven* against the *Church* and people of the *Jews*, summoning and requiring them to come and appeare before the *Tribunall* of the great God, there to make answer to somewhat that should be objected against them. The *Quarrell* in brief was this. In that *Church* (as in every Church there ever have

have been, and will be) there were many *formall Hypocrites*, such as stood much upon legall *Ceremonies* and *Sacrifices*, in so much as they placed all their *Religion* in those *externall observances*, in the mean time over-looking those τὰ βαρύτερα τοῦ νόμου (as our Saviour calleth them) *The weightier things of the Law*; *Judgement*, *Mercie* and *Faith* (or *Faithfulnesse*,) with the exercises of true *Pietie*, and *Charitie* not regarding the true inward *Spirituall worship* and service of God. Hereupon the Lord by his Prophet here cites and summons the whole Church to come, and give an account of the generall *formalitie*. *Gather my Saints together unto me*, &c.

Mat. 23. 23.

In the words we might take notice of two particulars: the *Processe*, and the *Persons*. The *Processe*, or *Citation* it selfe in the first words, *Gather together unto me* (or *before me.*) The *Persons* cited, summoned, you have them here described, first, by their *Quality*, they were *Saints*, *Gods* Saints. *Gather my Saints together unto me.*] Secondly, by their *Act*, they were *Covenanters*; which *Act* is amplified by the *Manner* and *Solemnitie* of it, they were such as had made a *Covenant* with their God, and that a *solemne* Covenant, *Those that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice.*

It is this last *branch* of the Text that my eie is upon at this time, being led to it by the present occasion; wherein you have the *Saints* of God described to be such as had made a *Covenant*, a *solemne Covenant* with their God. [*Those that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice.*]

By Sacrifice,] *Gnales Zubach*, (saith the Originall) *super Sacrificium*, *Over Sacrifice*. This Clause I find diversly construed by divers *Expositors*, some carrying it one way, some another, according to a threefold interpretation of the precedent word *Saints*.

1. By *Saints* some here understand the *Faithfull people* of God among the *Iews*, the select company of *True Worshipers*.

Ta-

Taking the word in that ſenſe, they conceive this latter clauſe to be a deſcription of them. They were ſuch as had made a *Covenant with God over Sacrifice*; that is (ſay they) *over* and *beſides* Sacrifice, or *in ſtead* of Sacrifice. So they explain the words, *ſuper Sacrificium, i.e. præter Sacrificium*, or *pro Sacrificio*. *Beſides* Sacrifice; they were ſuch as did not reſt themſelves contented in any Legall Ceremonie, they did not *ſubſiſtere in cerenis umbris* (as *Calvin* ſpeaks,) *ſit down in thoſe ſhadows*; they apprehended that there was *aliquid altius*, ſomewhat of a *higher nature* in the Covenant betwixt God and his people, and that they mainly looked at, and applied themſelves unto. Or *in ſtead* of Sacrifice. In ſtead of thoſe *legall ſacrifices*, and *ceremoniall obſervances*, (wherein the greateſt part placed all their Religion,) they *conſecrated themſelves* unto the Lord, gave up themſelves unto God by a *ſolemne Covenant*. In ſtead of thoſe *dead* and *unreaſonable* Sacrifices, of *bruit beaſts*, they offered up unto God that ζῶσαν θυσίαν, that *rationabile obſequium* (as the Apoſtle deſcribes the Sacrifices of Chriſtians) that *Living Sacrifice*, that *Reaſonable ſervice*; devoting themſelves to the true inward ſpirituall worſhip and ſervice of God, whereunto they had bound themſelves by ſolemne Vow and Covenant. This Expoſition I find *Calvin* and *Mollerus* after him, not wholy diſallowing. *Rom.* 12. 1.

Others in the ſecond place, taking the word [*Saints*] in a cleane contrarie ſenſe, underſtanding by it *formall Hypocrites*, (who are here called by the name of *Saints*, either by way of *Ironie*, or elſe becauſe they were ſuch *in intentione*, (as the Apoſtle ſaith of them) *Jewes and Saints outwardly* in the outward appearance, Saints by *Profeſſion*, they looke upon this latter clauſe as a *Character* of them. They were ſuch as had made a Covenant with God, *over Sacrifice*, or *with*, or *by* Sacrifice; wherein (ſay they) they ſo offered Sacrifice to God, as if that had been all that his Covenant required, which when they *Species Ironiæ ſubeſt quoad degeneres & ſimulatos Judæos. Calv. ad loc.*

they had done, they now thought that God could not but be well pleased with them; nay, they thought that hereby they had *tied* and *bound* God after a sort unto them, *viz.* by their Sacrifices. A true Character of a *formall Hypocrite*, who so pleaseth himself in the *opus operatum* of a dutie, as that hee thinketh God cannot but be *well pleased* with it. He so looks upon his services and duties, as if God were beholding to him for them, and obliged to him by them. Thus *Scultetus*, and some others here carrie it.

Ex opere operato putant se Deo placere, Scultet. ad loc.

3 But not to rest in either of these: There is yet a third, and a last sense, which I rather incline unto, apprehending it both more *simple* and *genuine*. The persons to whom this *Citation* is here directed they were not any *select companie*, whether of *True Worshippers*, or *Formall Hypocrites*, but the *whole body* of the Jewish Church, collectively considered, consisting of both these, yet here called by the name of *Saints*, Because there were some, and no question many such amongst them, *Saints in truth* as well, as in *appearance*. Now the determination here (as often elswhere) is taken from the better part. *It is an honour* (saith *Calvin*, writing upon the Text) *which God putteth upon his Saints, to denominate a promiscuous multitude consisting of good and bad from them*; I, though they be the far lesse number. That was the case here in the Text. In the *Jewish* Church at this time, the greatest part were no better then *formall Hypocrites*, yet in as much as there was a partie of *Saints* amongst them, God calleth them all by this name. Secondly, If they were not all *Saints*, yet they ought to have been so. They were all *Saints by calling*, called to be Saints, and so called *Saints*, and that to put them in mind of their *Dutie*, what ones they all ought to be. Now taking the word in this sense, we shall finde this subsequent clause to be a description generally of all the *visible members* of that *visible Church*, they were such as had *made a Covenant with God over Sacrifice, with* Sacrifice, by Sacrifice.

For

For the full and cleere understanding whereof wee might take notice of an ancient *custome* in use both amongst the people of the *Jews*, and other *Nations* also, who were wont in their making of *Covenants*, for the greater *solemnity* of them, to make them, *with* or by *Sacrifice*. Which they did after this manner. Having *slain* the Sacrifice they *divided*, laying the parts one over against the other, and so the *Covenanters* went between them. Thus the *Lord* himself (who was the first instituter of this Ceremonie) made a Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen.*15. Intending there to make a solemne Covenant with him, he directeth *Abraham* what to do, *viz. Take an Heighfer, and a Goat and a Ram, &c.* And what should he do with them? Why divide them in pieces, parting them asunder, laying the parts one against the other. And to what end was this? Why that the Lord might *passe betwixt them*, which accordingly he did in that visible signe of a *Burning Lampe in the midst of a smoaking furnace*, Verse 17. *Behold a smoaking furnace and a Burning Lampe passed between those pieces.* Thus did *God* make this Covenant with *Abraham*, a Covenant *with*, or *By Sacrifice*.

*Gen.*15. 18. *Ver.*9,10. *Ver.* 17.

And thus the Lords people, the people of the *Jews*, were wont to make Covenant with him. Bringing a *Sacrifice* before the Lord they cut it in pieces, and so passed betwixt the parts. Such a *Covenant* the Lord putteth the *Princes* and *People* of *Israel* in minde of that they had made with him, *Ier.*34. 18. *The Covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the Calf in twain, and passed betweene the parts thereof.* This it seemeth was their Custome, which as they took it from *God* himself, so the *Heathens* borrowed it from them, who were wont to make their Covenants also after the same manner. *Et cæsâ jungebant fœdera Porcâ.* *Killing*, and *cutting* a *Swine* in pieces. (*Similis labris lactuca*, a fit *Sacrifice* for such *Sacrificers*) they *struck* their Covenants. And from this Custome

Ier. 34. 18. *Virgil.*

Aynſ-worth, ſup. Pſal. 25.10. Pſ. 89. 3.

(as our *Aynſworth* elſwhere wel obſerves it) cometh that phraſe of *Striking* or *Cutting* a Covenant. *I have made a Covenant with my choſen*, (ſaith the Lord, *Pſal. 89.*) The Originall hath it, *Karati Berith, Excioſi fœdus* (as *Montanus* renders it) I have *Cut* or *Struck* a Covenant. Which phraſe is alſo here retained in the Text. *Thoſe that have made a Covenant, Corethi Berithi, Ferientes Pactum*, that have *Cut* or *Struk* a Covenant *by Sacrifice, viz.* by *cutting* of the Sacrifice and parting it a ſunder have *made a covenant* with me.

Such a Covenant had the people of the *Iews* entred and made with their God, a *Covenant*, and a *Solemne* Covenant.

Doct. *And ſuch a Covenant muſt all the Lords People enter with their God, all that would be owned and acknowledged of God as his People, as his Saints, they muſt ſtrike Covenant*, and *a Solemne Covenant with their God.* Upon theſe two I ſhall inſiſt ſeverally, briefly by way of *Explication*, putting them together in the *Application.*

1 1 *The Lords people are all Covenanters*, ſuch as have ſtruck a Covenant with God. Such were the members of the *Iewiſh* Church; and ſuch are the true members of *Chriſtian* Churches. A truth which needeth no confirmation. This it is that gives both *Eſſe*, and *Diſtinguere*, that *maketh* a people to be *Gods* people, and *diſtinguiſheth* them from all other people; Even the *Covenant* betwixt God and them. This it was that diſtiuguiſhed the *ſeed of Abraham*, and the people of the *Iews* from all other people in the World, and that made them Gods people, even the *Covenant* betwixt God and them, the *ſigne* and *ſeale* whereof they carried in their *fleſh*, the *Seale of* Circumciſion, which is therefore called *The* Covenant. *My Covenant ſhall be in your fleſh*: that is a ſigne of the Covenant. And this it is that now diſtinguiſheth the *true Church* of Chriſt, and the *true members* thereof from all others, even the *Covenant* betwixt God and them; the *ſignes* and *ſeals* whereof

Gen. 17. 13.

whereof are the two *Sacraments* of the new Testament, *Baptisme*, and the *Lords Supper*; both Seals of this Covenant; the one of their *entrance* into Covenant, the other of their *continuance* in that Covenant.

Q. For the opening and illustrating of this, the Question will be; *What is this Covenant betwixt God and his People?* Q.

A. To this the Prophet *Ieremy* will return us an answer in a few words, *Ier.* 31. *This is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel*, &c. *I will be their God, and they shall be my People*, This is the Covenant which God maketh with them; and from thence we may easily learne what is the Covenant that they make with him, the one being but a *Counterpaine* to the other, *viz. That he shall be their God, and they will be his People.* It is the nature of *Covenants* to be *mutuall*. And such is the Covenant betwixt God and his people, consisting of two parts; the Covenant on *Gods part*, and the Covenant on *their parts*. A. *Ier.* 31. 33

The *Covenant on Gods part* is, that *hee will be their God, and they shall be his People.* So ran the Covenant that God made with *Abraham. I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*: And such is the Covenant that God maketh with his Church and people in all ages, (it being still one and the same Covenant for substance) *viz.* that hee will be *their God*; Their God? What is that? Nay, what is it not? their *Father*, their *King*, their *Saviour*, their *Deliverer*, their *All*, a *God Allsufficient*; such a one he is in himself, and such a one he will shew himself to all that are in Covenant with him: And *They shall be his People, acknowledged* of him, *favoured* by him: Hee will *pardon* their sins, hee will *heale* their *infirmities*, *supply* their *wants*, *sanctifie* their *natures*, bestowing upon them all good things requisite for the. That is the Covenant on Gods part. *Gen.* 17 1.

But what is the *Covenant on his Peoples part*? That is the Covenant we have now principally to deal with. That Cove-

nant wherein the Lords people do bind themselves unto him. Now this is nothing but an *Eccho* to the other, a *Restipulation*. When the hearts of a people come to close with God, taking him for their God, and giving up themselves to him to be his people: When to Gods [*I will be your God, and you shall be my People*] their Souls *Eccho* backe again [*Lord, Thou shalt be our God, and we will be thy People.*] Now is this Covenant made up. Such was the Covenant that *Jacob* promised to renew with his God upon his safe returne from his journey, Gen. 28. *If the Lord will be with mee, &c. so that I return safe to my fathers house, &c. Then shall the Lord be my God.* Now what is it for a people to *take God for their God?* Why to engage themselves in the solemne Vow, purpose, and resolution of their hearts that they will *set him up as God*, and that both in their *Hearts*, and *Lives*, giving all those respects unto him which are due to a *God*, *viz.* to *Love* him above all, to *Feare* him above all, to *Trust* in him above all, to *Worship* him according to his will, to *walk* before him in the conscionable endeavour of an *universall obedience*. This it is for a man to take God for his God. And this must all the Lords people doe, striking such a Covenant with God, even a *Covenant of Obedience*. Such was the Covenant which the *Israelites* entred with their God at the giving of the *Law*. Upon *Moses* his comming downe from the Mount, having received the *Tables of the Covenant*, and the *Book of the Covenant*, (the *Morall*, *Judiciall*, and *Ceremoniall Laws*) from God, he calleth the people to enter a *Covenant* with God. And what was that Covenant? Why a *Covenant of Obedience*. *He read the Book of the Covenant in their eares, And the People said, All that the Lord hath said we will do it, and be obedient.* This was the Covenant, for the confirming whereof *Moses* then *sprinkled upon them the bloud of the Covenant, viz.* the Bloud of the *Sacrifices* wherewith they made that Covenant. And such

Gen. 28 21.

Ex. 24. 7.

ſuch a Covenant it is that all the Lords people have made, and are to make with their God. A *Covenant*, and that

A *ſolemne* Covenant, a word of that, and but a word, my aime being chiefly at the *Application*. Such a Covenant it was that the people of the *Iews* had made and often renewed with their God, not a *ſlight* but a *ſolemne* Covenant, a *Covenant with Sacrifice*. Many were the *Sacrifices* inſtituted by God, and obſerved by his people under the old Teſtament. Of theſe Sacrifices, as there were divers *kinds*, ſo there were divers *ends* and *uſes*; Amongſt other, this was common to them all, they were all as ſo many *ſigilla*, *ſyngraphæ*, ſo many *ſignes* and *ſeals* of the Covenant betweene *God* and his *People*. *Signes*, *Commemorative* ſignes and tokens, putting them in mind of the Covenant. *Seals* for confirmation of that Covenant, the Covenant on *Gods* part, the Covenant on *their* part. *On Gods part.* Hereby did God aſſure them that hee would be their God. *On their part.* Hereby did they binde themſelves unto him that they would be his people. This was one common end of all their Sacrifices; the proper and particular end of ſome of them. 2

Theſe *Sacrifices* they are now ceaſed: But in the meantime God hath not left his Church without *ſignes* and *ſeals* of this Covenant. Such are the *Sacraments* of the *New Teſtament*; *Baptiſme* and the *Lords Supper*; both *ſeals* of this Covenant, the one (as I told you) a Seal of our *Entrance* into it, the other of our *continuance* in it. And *with* or by theſe doe the Lords people now ſtrike a Covenant with their God. Giving themſelves to the Lord in *Baptiſme*, they confirme that gift in the receiving of the *Supper*, both which are appurtenances to this Covenant, annexed to it as for the *teſtification*, and *confirmation*, ſo for the *ſolemnization* of it. I might adde Chriſtians now, as they have their *Sacraments*, ſo alſo have they their *Sacrifices*, their *Propitiatorie* Sacrifice, and their *Euchariſticall* Sa-

Heb.9, 26 Sacrifices. Their *Propitiatorie Sacrifice*, viz. *Christ* himself the substance of all those Ceremoniall shadows, at whom all the Legall Sacrifices looked. Their *Eucharisticall Sacrifices*, 1 Pet.2.5 their *Spirituall* Sacrifices of *Prayers* and *Prayses*, and other *spirituall Oblations*, which as *spirituall Priests* they offer up unto God. Now *by* and *with* these Sacrifices they are to make their Covenant with their God.

Heb.8.6 1 By and through that *Ilasticall*, that *Propitiatory* Sacrifice, the *Lord Jesus Christ*, who is the *Mediatour* of this Covenant, bringing God and man together, and that by by *Passing* (as I may say) betwixt the *Parties*. An observable difference betwixt those *Sacrifices* and this *Sacrifice*. There the *Covenanters* passed betwixt the parts of the *Sacrifice*: Here the *Sacrifice* passeth betwixt the *Covenanters*, *Christ* interposing himself as a middle person betwixt two disagreeing parties, bringing them together; *Reconciling* God to man, and man to God; first, *meriting*, then *applying* that Reconciliation. And by and through him it is that Christians are now to make this Covenant with God; *viz.* with an eye to *Jesus Christ* the Mediatour of this Covenant; Taking God for their God in Christ, and giving up themselves to be his people in Christ, Thus are they to Covenant *by* Christ, and (as I may say) *over* Christ. Even as under the Law, the person that came to offer a *Burnt offering* to the Lord, to make an Attonement for his sin, (and so to renew his Covenant with God) he Levit. 1. 4. was to stand over his Sacrifice, *putting his hand upon the head thereof*, thereby disburdening himself of his *sin*, and laying it upon the *Sacrifice*. Even thus now under the Gospell, Christians comming to make or renew their Covenant with God, they must bring a *Sacrifice* with them, even the *Lord Christ*; (represented & shadowed out by those typicall Sacrifices) presenting him unto God his Father, with all, laying their hands upon the *head* of that Sacrifice, by *faith* resting & relying

ng upon Jesus Christ, upon the merit of his death and obedience, for the pardon of all their sins, the acceptation of their persons, the salvation of their souls. Having thus layed their hands upon this Sacrifice, now are they to make a Covenant with God, a *Covenant of obedience*. And thus may they be said to Covenant *By* and *Over* Sacrifice.

2 And as *Over*, so *with* Sacrifice. As over this *Propitiatory*, so with *Gratulatory* Sacrifice. Such a Sacrifice it is the Psalmist calleth for from this Covenanting people in the fourteenth Verse of this Psalme. *Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high: And call upon mee in the day of trouble, Verse* 15. These are *Evangelicall* Sacrifices, more worth then all the Sacrifices of the Law, *Prayers* and *Prayses*. And these Sacrifices must they offer up that will make a Covenant with God; *so making a Covenant with Sacrifice*. But my promise was not to give way to doctrinall Enlargements. The service of the day calleth for *Application*, which let it be directed only by way of *Exhortation*, whereof Take these three Branches.

1 *That wee would all of us strike such a Covenant with our God.*

2 *That having struck this Covenant, wee would be mindfull of it.*

3 *That being mindfull of it, wee would be faithfull in it.*

Begin with the first, which putteth us all upon this *act of Covenanting*. As many of us as desire to be owned of God as his people, let us strike a *Covenant*, a *Solemne Covenant* with him. This is that which the Prophet *Jeremy* saith of the children of *Israel*, and the children of *Iuda* returning out of captivitie should doe, and excite one an other to doe it: *Jer.* 50. *Come* (shall they say) *and let us joyne our selves to the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant that shall not be forgotten.* And this in the feare of God let all of us here present this day doe, and encourage

1. Ier. 50.5.

courage one another to do it. *Come let us joyne our ſelves unto the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant that ſhall not be forgotten.*

Obiect. Why but happily you may ſay, what needs this Exhortation to a people that are in Covenant with God, already? This work is not now to doe; we have all of us done it alreadie. We have given up our *names*, and wee have given up our *ſelves* unto the Lord. This we have done in *Baptiſme*, and this wee have done in the *Sacrament* of the *Lords Supper*, both Seals of this Covenant. Thus are we a people in Covenant with God alreadie.

Anſw. And were not the children of *Iſrael*, and the children of *Juda* ſo? They were a people in Covenant with God before, and in their captivity, being the *ſeed of Abraham*, and carrying the ſeal of the Covenāt in their fleſh. Yet for all that wee finde them there taking up thoughts and reſolutions of *joyning* themſelves to the Lord in a Covenant, and that by *renewing* the ſame Covenant.

A practice frequent amongſt the people of God in the old Teſtament. Many inſtances wee meet with, holding forth to us *preſidents* for this *practice*, the *renewing of Covenant*. This we find the people of God doing upon divers occaſions. Specially in theſe two caſes.

In caſe of { *Defection.* / *Affliction.*

1 In caſe of *Defection* when by falling away from God they had broken this Covenant. Secondly, In caſe of *Affliction*, when having broken his Covenant, the Judgements of God were out againſt them, either preſent or imminent, feared or felt. In theſe caſes we ſhall ſee them ordinarily applying themſelves to this Remedie, the renewing of Covenant. Take but two inſtances for both; the firſt of *Aſah*, the ſecond of *Hezekiah*, both obvious. The former 2 *Chron.* 15. There you

you shall finde King *Asah* and his people making a solemne Covenant with God: *Verse* 12. *And they entred into a Covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul*, &c. This they did, and upon what occasion did they it? Why, at that time they stood guiltie of a great *Defection*; so you have it, *Verse* 3. *Now for a long time Israel hath bin without the true God, and without a teaching Priest, and without Law.* A wonderfull defection; And behold *Affliction* following it, great *Affliction*, great *Distraction*, great *vexation*; so it follows. *Verse* 5. *And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon the inhabitants of the Countries.* Such was their condition. In this condition what course take they? Why they apply themselves to this as the most sovereigne remedie, *They entred into a Covenant to seek the Lord their God*, &c.

2 *Chron.* 15.12. *Ver.* 3. *Ver.* 5.

The like did *Hezekiah*, as you may see in the 29 chapter of the same Book. *Now it is in mine heart to make a Covenant*, (saith *Hezekiah*) *Verse* 10. Not a *Personall*, but a *Nationall* Covenant. And what occasioned it? Why first, the Kingdome at that time lay under the guilt of a great *Defection*: The *Worship* of God had been *neglected*, the *Temple ruinous* and *polluted*: So you have it in the 6 and 7 Verses of that Chapter, *Our fathers have trespassed and done that which was evill in the eyes of the Lord our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord, and turned their backs; Also they have shut up the doores of the Porch, and put out the Lamps, and have not burnt Incense, nor offered burnt offerings in the holy place unto the God of Israel.* Thus was the *Temple-worship* neglected, the place unfrequented, nay *polluted*. In the fifth Verse of the Chapter, *Hezekiah* calls for the *Levits*, requiring them to *sanctifie themselves*, and to *sanctifie the house of the Lord, and to carry forth the filthinesse out of the holy*

2 *Chron.* 29.10. *Ver.* 6. *Ver.* 15

place. Lying under this great Defection, they were also under great *Affliction*; So it followeth, Verse 8,9. *Wherefore the wrath of the Lord was upon* Judah *and* Jerusalem, *and he hath delivered them unto trouble, to astonishment, and unto hissing. For loe our Fathers have falne by the sword, and our sonnes, and our daughters, and our wives are in Captivity for this.* Such was their present condition. And hereupon it is that that worthy Reformer betakes himselfe, and his people to this course, the renewing of Covenant. *Now it is in my heart to make a Covenant*, &c.

Ver. 8.

Ver. 9.

To these instances (if need were) I might adde that other in the days of *Nehemiah*. The people were generally guiltie of a great *Defection*. So much the *Levits* in their names confesse, and acknowledge. *Nehem.* 9. 34,35. *Wee have done wickedly: Neither have our Kings, nor our Princes, our Priests, nor our Fathers kept thy Law*, &c. *For they have not served thee in their Kingdom, and in thy great goodnesse that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them.* That *Defection* was followed with great *Affliction*: so you have in the Verses following. *Behold we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our Fathers to eat the fruit thereof*, &c. *behold wee are servants in it: And it yieldeth much increase to the Kings whom thou hast set over us, because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattell at their pleasure, And we are in great distresse.* Now in this condition, behold them betaking themselves to the same course. *And because of all this wee make a sure Covenant, and write it, and our Princes, Levits, and Priests seal unto it.* Verse 38.

Nek. 9. 34.

Ver. 35.

Ver. 36.

Ver. 37.

Ver. 38.

This were they wont to doe upon these *occasions*. Now whether there be the *same occasions* to be found amongst us, us of this *Nation*, or no, I suppose there is none of us here present, wil make any question of it. Alas the Evidence is but too cleer, and that as for our present *Affliction*, so for our former *Defection*; the one of which usually attends upon the other;

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Affliction upon *Defection*, ſo you find it in all the places fore-mentioned; and ſo we (at leaſt many of our brethren) in this Kingdome finde it by ſad and wofull experience at this day. Our *Defection* went before, and that a great Defection. The *Temple* of God amongſt us ſcoured (bleſſed be God) the *doors* thereof were not ſhut up, yet we cannot ſay but it was *polluted*, and that by bringing in *humane Inventions* to thruſt out divine Ordinances. The *Lamps* ſome of them *extinguiſhed*, and put out, the moſt of them *burning dim*, either for want of *oile*, or *ſnuffing*. How few *Burning and ſhining Lamps*? The *Worſhip* of God for the moſt part how was it turned to a meer *Formalitie*? our condition therein being but too like that of *Iſraels* herein the Text; little to be ſeene in moſt places but a σκελετὸν, the meager carcaſſe of a cold and formall devotion, The *heart* of Religion being well nigh eaten out: Little *power* of it to be found in the *hearts* and *lives* of the greateſt part. Multitudes of *ſcandalous* perſons ſwarming every where, and yet continued members of the Church. *Swearers, Drunkards,* Pſ.50.17 *Vnclean Perſons, Prophane Perſons*, ſuch as *hated Reformation*, yet even they *taking the Covenant of God* (the Seal of his Covenant) *in their mouthes*, polluting the holy Ordinances of God by their unworthy partaking in them. For the reſt, how have the greateſt part been either meerly *Civill*, or elſe *Lukewarme*. Little *Heate*, little *Life*, little *Power* of Godlineſſe to be felt or ſeene. Surely our *Defection*, and our *Provocations* have beene great. And our *Affliction* at this day ſeemes to anſwer it. Our caſe being now the very ſame with *Iſraels* in the days of King *Aſah*; *In thoſe times there was no peace to him* 2 Chron. *that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon* 15.5,6. *all the Inhabitants of the Countries; And Nation was deſtroyed of Nation, and Citie of Citie, for God did vex them with all adverſity.* So was it with them: And is it not ſo with us at this day? Now, in this condition what ſhall wee doe? Why, *Now let us joyne our ſelves to the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant.*

Now, never was Covenant more seasonable, more needfull for any people, then it is for *England* at this day. Let us *now* make a Covenant with the Lord our God, and that a *Perpetuall* Covenant. Covenants wee have made, but alasse they have beene *temporary*, *momentanie*, soone forgotten. *Let us now joyne our selves to the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant that shall not be forgotten.* No way so hopefull as this to appease the *wrath* that is gone out, smoaking against us, and burning amongst us, to put an end to our present *Afflictions*, and *Distractions*, to *remove* the Evils which we feel, to *prevent* the judgments which we fear, to *procure* the mercies which we want, to *continue* the mercies wee enjoyne, to stay our God amongst us.

Object. *Ob.* True (you may say) were it onely such a Covenant, a *joyning our selves to the Lord in a Covenant*, then might wee hope for such an issue. But alasse this Covenant here propounded and tendered to us, wee finde it to be of another nature, containing in it somthings to us *impertinent*, and others scarce *warrantable*.

[A. *A.* Here I know some thing will be expected by way of satisfaction. Give me leave as briefly & as fully as I may, or can, *Liberare animam* to *discharge conscience*, both mine own & others, by resolving such scruples as are most obvious, and (as I conceive) of greatest importance. In the *Generall* take the resolution thus. Though this be not the *onely* thing in this Covenant, yet I take it (and so would I have every one here present to looke upon it) to be the *mayne*, viz. *The joyning of our selves, and the whole Kingdome to the* Lord. What else means this grand Designe of a *through Reformation*, a *Personall*, a *Nationall Reformation* *Personall* of our own *hearts*, *lives*, *Families*: *Nationall* of the *Kingdom*, the three *Kingdoms*. The former we promise to performe, the latter we engage our selves by all lawfull ways in our severall places, and Stations to

to endeavour. And what is this but a *Ioyning our ſelves to the Lord by Covenant*.

Some particulars, I confeſſe, here may be found, which at the firſt ſight may ſeeme to be *heterogeneall*, ſome of them *Forraigne*, and others of them of meer *Civill* concernment, but upon a review we ſhal find moſt of them (if not all of them) to lie in a way of *tendency* unto that great and maine end, (like ſo many leſſer *ſtreams* which though happily they have their ſeverall windings and turnings, yet at the length they all diſcharge and unload themſelves into the ſame common *Channell*) All of them conducing either *Immediatly* or *mediatly* to the promoting of this deſired *Reformation*.

1 To this purpoſe tends that firſt branch of the *firſt Article*, where wee promiſe to endeavour the *preſervation of the Reformed Rtligion in the Church of Scotland againſt the COMMON ENEMY*. A clauſe which ſeemeth to look directly upon *them*, but withall it reflects and looks back upon *us*, who are much interſſed & concerned in their (whether *woe*, or) *welfare*. In their *peace* we may the rather hope for peace. In their *Ruine* we cannot look long to ſurvive. Such are the mutuall *engagements* and *concerments* of both Kingdomes, as that in all probabilitie they are like to *ſtand* or *fall*, *ſinke* or *ſwim* together. And ſuch is that other Clauſe in the Cloſe of the ſame Article, where wee promiſe to endeavour the *bringing of all the Churches in the three Kingdomes to the neereſt conjunction, and uniformitie in Religion, Government*, &c. A Deſigne of high concernment. No one thing tending more directly to the ſetling and eſtabliſhing of the true *Religion* of God in all of them.

2 To like purpoſe is the obligation in that *ſecond Article*, which ingageth all to endeavour the extirpation of *Popery*, and the *eradicating* of ſuch other *evill weeds*, as may endanger the ſucking out the *heart* of *Religion*, how ever hinder the *growth* of it.

3 To

3 To the same purpose, (as *truly*; though not so *immediatly*) tends that ingagement in the *third Article*, for the *mutuall preservation of the RIGHTS and PRIVILEDGES of PARLIAMENTS, and the Liberties of the Kingdomes*, with the joint-preservation and defence of his *Majesties person and authoritie*. Which, of what concernment they are for the establishing, and preserving of the true Religion of God, I shall not need to tell you. The *Laws*, and just *Liberties* of a Kingdome, they are as the *outworks* to *Religion*. If these be surprized, or stormed, taken in, it is not to bee expected that *Religion* should long hold out. And therefore not onely expediencie, but necessitie requires, that they should be taken into the same *counsels* with Religion it selfe. Of these Laws, and Liberties, the *Kings Majestie* with his *Parliaments*, are by office the proper *Guardians*, the *grand Conservatours*. Great Reason then their should be a speciall respect had unto them upon whom under God wee have such an immediate dependance either for our *welfare*, or *woe*.

I might go on, and shew you the like in the three other Articles. The *discovery of Incendiaries*, persons dangerous to the *Church*, or dangerous to the *State*, such as shall seeke and endeavour the *breeding*, or *fomenting* of *Divisions* in either, and consequently indanger the Ruine of both; of which you may read, *Article* 4.

The endeavour of *preserving the Civill Peace and Union betwixt the two Kingdoms*, a mercy denied to our Forefathers, now setled and established by the mutuall agreement of both *Parliaments*, spoken of *Article* 5.

The mutuall *defence* and *assistance* of all that are or shall be *confederated* with us, in the *lawfull pursuit of this Covenant*, mentioned, *Article* 6.

All these how conducible they are to the *maine end* here propounded, I suppose there is none that looketh right upon them

them with an impartiall and unprejudiced eye, but will readily see. And being *subservient* thereunto, no reason why any should scruple the admittance of them within the verge and pale of a *Religious Covenant.*

Ob. Why, but it may be said; In this *Covenant* there are some things which may seem not onely *heterogeneall* to *Religion*, but *incompatible* and inconsistent with it: Passages subject to just scruple, which a tender conscience cannot but stumble at. In the taking of an *Oath* there are three main requisites. Wee finde them all together in that knowne Text, *Ier. 4. Thou shalt sweare the Lord liveth. in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righteousnesse.* Now, as for the *first* of these (may some say) it is possible to observe it; (and I wish it may be so by all that shall adventure upon this Covenant this day) *viz.* to sweare in *Truth*, in the uprightnesse, and sinceritie of the heart; But how the *second*? how the *third*? How in *Iudgment*? how in *Righteousnesse*? *Object.* *Ier. 4. 2.*

Alleg. 1. *How in Iudgment?* When as there are some particulars here, which the greatest part understand not, know not what they mean. Such is the *Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government of the Church of Scotland*; And such are the *Rights and Priviledges of Parliaments*, with the *Liberties of the Kingdomes*; things which the greatest part are wholly, or in a great part ignorant of. And how can they engage themselves to defend and maintain what they know not.

A. I answer; as well as to maintain the *Laws* of the *Land*, or the *Prerogatives* of the *Prince*, neither of which are obvious to every vulgar eye, few having an exact and distinct cognizance of them: And yet none (upon that ground) scruple the engaging of themselves by solemne *Oaths* (such as the Oath of *Allegiance*, *Supremasie*, &c. to defend, and maintain them.

2 But secondly, how ever wee may be ignorant of some pay-

particulars, yet I suppose the *generals* of both, either are, or may be known by all that are not affectedly ignorant.

3 But thirdly; Take notice that, as for the *Doctrine and Discipline* of the Church of *Scotland*, wee are not bound to *Observe*, but to *Preserve* it. Not to observe it *here*, but to preserve it *there*, and that onely *against the common Enemies* of both Churches, both Kingdomes. Which is no more, then (for ought I know) wee may engage our selves to doe to any other of the forregne Reformed Churches, notwithstanding their *Doctrine, Worship, Discipline* be not exactly *knowne* unto us, or (it may be) in some particulars not *approved* by us.

4 An in the fourth place, As for *Parliament-Priviledges, and Kingdoms-Liberties*, the oblgation here layed upon us for the maintaining of them, it bindeth us no further, then as they shall be *declared*, & *evidenced* to us to be such. The like whereunto I may say of those ill weeds mention'd in the *second Article, Superstitiõ, Heresie, Schisme*; which we here ingage our selves to endeavour the *Extirpation* of. Here the engagement reacheth not to what ever shall be called by these names, (The *Jews Religion. Festus* calls it *Superstition, Acts* 25. The *Christian Religion* by the *Jews* is called *Heresie*, Acts 24. And our *Just seperation* from the Church of *Rome*, is by them called *Schisme*,) but what shall be evidenced so to be by the *light* of the *Word*, and *consent* of the *Churches*.

Acts 25 19.

Acts 24 14.

Alleg. 2 But you wil say (in the second place,) Though happilie we may sweare in *Iudgement*, understanding what we swear to; yet, *how in Iustice?* how in *Righteousnesse?* Here is the Pinche, Seeing there is somwhat in this Covenant, which we engage our endeavours for the extirpation of, which the *Law* hath planted; If not the Law of *God*, yet the Law of the *Land*. It is *Prelacie*, by name a *Plant* (say some) of *Gods own planting*, planted by the hands either of *Christ* himselfe, or his *Apostles*, or at least of *Apostolicall men* in the times of some of the

the Apostle; And as *planted* them, so *watered* by the Churches of God in all succeeding ages. And shall we find our selves to endeavour the rooting out of a plant thus *planted*, thus *watered*?

A. Mistake it not. It is not *Prelacy*, (at least not *this* *Prelacy*,) that ever yet made this Clayme. True it is, *Episcopacy* hath done it, (with what right, I leave it to those who are able, to judge,) but *Prelacy* never. *Prelacy* (as the word hath been commonly taken amongst us) for my own part (if I have not mistaken it) I have ever looked upon it as an *Exorbitancy* of *Primitive Episcopacy*, an *Excrescence* from that first *Stem*, and a thing distinct from it. Sure I am, the *Prelacy* here spoken of is: Which, what it is, the next words explaine, *viz.* the present *Church-Government by Arch-Bishops, Bishops, Chancellours, Commissaries*, &c. This is our *Prelacy*; The *totum conjunctum*, the whole body of the *present Hierarchy*, being thus *clothed*, thus *circumstanced*, thus attended with such a *subordination of Officers*, some of which (most of which) never yet had the face to plead a *Jus divinum*, or yet *Apostolicum*; neither hath the Church of God at any time found them (to say no more) any such ἀντιλήψεις, κυβερνήσεις, *Helpers, Governours*, or (as the new Translation renders it, putting them together) *Helpers in Government*, that it should have any reason to desire the continuance of them. This is the *Prelacy* which wee here ingage our endeavours against. Mr. *Case.* 1 *Cor.* 12. 28

Not everie, not all kindes of Prelacie, or Episcopacie, (I speake now in the language of others, such as being of Counsell in framing and contriving this Covenant, should know the meaning of it, and no friends to this *Prelacy* I am sure.) *Not Prelacy in the latitude of the notion thereof.* No. *Some Materials of Prelacy*, what ever Government wee have must *yet be left.* There cannot be a *Parliament* without a *Speaker*, nor yet a *Committee* without a *Chayr-man*, nor yet an *Enquest* *Master Coleman in his Hearts Engagement Preached and published by Order, and Master Cases Quarrell of the Covenant.*

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or *Jury* without a *Foreman*; Thus in the *State*, and thus in the *Church*. There cannot be a *Synod*, an *Assembly*, a *Classis*, a *Presbytery* without a προεδρος, a *Præses*, a *Primus Presbyter*, one *first in Order*. And this in the latitude of the word) is *Prelacy*. Not *all Prelacy* then, nor yet *all Episcopacy*. *Paul* speaking to
Acts 20. 28. the *Elders* at *Ephesus*, and writing to the *Elders at Philippi*, he
Phil. 1. 1. calleth them ἐπισκοπους, *Bishops*. And should it be supposed that *Episcopacie* being *Circumcised* (to use the word of my Authour) *from these exuberant Members, and Officers*; stripped of this *unnecessary Equipage*, and reduced to the primitive simplicitie of *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, should by *Authority* be conceived to be a meet and convenient Government for the Church in this Kingdome, it is not conceived that any man should stand engaged by vertue of this *Oath* and *Covenant* to oppose Authoritie, in endeavouring the *extirpation* of it; *That being not this Government, but a new Government. Now wee doe not sweare against what is not.* Neither can a man properly be said to endeavour to *eradicate* that which as yet is not *planted*. Nay more. *Shall there be an Episcopacie or Prelacie found in the Word as the way of Gospel-Government which Christ hath bequeathed to his Churches, and this be made appeare; We are so far from swearing to extirpate such a Prelacie, as that rather wee are bound by vertue of this Oath to entertaine it as the minde and will of Iesus Christ.* This I have spoken, (not in my own but in others words) not to declare my own *private Opinion* in this great controversie of the Times, the point of *Church-Government*, (accounting it in my self in this Juncture of times too high *presumption* to *anticipate* or forestall the Judgment of that *Venerable Convention*, before whom this controversie now depends, expecting a speedy and faire Decision according to the evidence of the Word) but onely to endeavour a *Satisfaction* to those of my *Brobren* or others, who possibly may conscientiously stumble at this stone, the supposed *Jus Divinum*, or *Apostolicum* of *Episcopacie*.

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Obi. But though a *Jus Divinum* be not ſtamped upon this Government, yet a *Jus humanum* is. Though it be not of a *Divine foundation*, yet it ſtandeth eſtabliſhed by the *Law of the Land*. And being ſo *planted*, how can we engage our ſelves to endeavour the *rooting of it out*.

A. Here, not to *diſpute* what I cannot *determine*, (nor, as it is ſuppoſed, any other) whether it be in every part of it eſtabliſhed by the *Law* or no. Let it be yielded that it is. What then? Shall we conceive our ſelves thereby ſo concluded and ſhut up, under this *Government*, as that what ever *inconvenience* we ſhall finde therein, yet we may not by lawfull ways and means, ſeek, and endeavour the *alteration* of it. It is a caſe which *Subiects* ſcruple not in the *Laws of the Land*, nor yet *Freemen* and *Burgeſſes* of a *Corporation*, or *Members* of the like *Society*, in the *formes of their Government*. Though ſworne to defend and maintaine them, yet finding by experience ſome evident and notable inconvenience in them, they will make no ſcruple (neither need they) to endeavour by lawfull ways, and meanes a Change and alteration in them. *Laws*, and *Ordinances* and *Forms of Government* though very uſefull in the firſt inſtitution of them, yet afterwards, through change of times, they may *degenerate*, and become *unuſefull*, it may be *preiudiciall* and *detrimentall*, croſſing that very end for which they were ordained. Thus is it with *humane Laws* and *Conſtitutions*, the beſt, the wiſeſt of them, they are like the men that made them, *mutable*, not unlike thoſe *liquours*, which will grow *flat* and *ſowre* with ſtanding. It is the Priviledge of *Gods Laws*, they never *degenerate*, never prove *unuſefull*, much leſſe *detrimentall* to the perſons to whom they are *given*, and by whom they are obſerved. But *Humane Laws* and *Conſtitutions* may, which when they doe, no reaſon why men ſhould be ſo irrecoverably concluded under them, as that they ſhould not by lawfull

ways and means (let that ſtill be carried along) *ſeek an alteration for the better.*

Obi. *For the better?* I, (may you ſay) were wee aſſured of that we would not be unwilling with ſuch an exchange. But in the meantime *Alterations* of this nature are *dangerous*, as in the *State*, ſo in the *Church*.

A. True, they are ſo: *viz.* where they are managed by *precipitate* or *ſiniſter counſels*, not carried on with due *deliberation*, & *advice*, ſpecially where this exchange is made by *Gueſs* and not by *Rule*; But that (I truſt) will not be found to be our condition. If multitudes of *unbyaſſed Counſellours* promiſe ſafety, (bleſſed be God) as yet the Kingdom wants them not, whether for *Church* or *State*. And with what *deliberation* they have hitherto proceeded in agitating the buſineſſe of both (ſpecially of the *Church*,) let their *Enemies* judge, wherein their *Proteſtation* is (and I think wee are bound to believe it) that all ſhall be done (as neer as may be) by *Rule*; And that not by a *Lesbian*, *leaden Rule*; (ſuch is the *Rule of* Prudence is, which every one may, bow and bend to his own intereſts) but by the inflexible *Rule of the Word*. Which if this worke be framed by, we ſhall have no cauſe to fear the alteration.

Specially if we conſider the condition of the preſent *Church-Government* (*no Government*) amongſt us, which indeed is little better then a *Nullitie*, an *Anarchie*, a meere *name* and *ſhadow* of Government, the *Coercive power* (which *animates* any Government, (being indeed the very *ſoul* of it, without which it is but a *cadaverous*, and *liveleſſe Corps*) being alreadie by an over-ruling hand of a moſt immediate providence, taken away, and that by *unqueſtionable authoritie*. Now, it is a received *Maxime*, *Better any Government, then no Government*; *Tyranny then Anarchy*. What the inconveniences of the one (the preſent *No-Government*) are, the Church of God amongſt us already feels to her eminent hazard. What ever the *ſucceeding Gouern-*

vernment shall be, yet may wee promise to our selves in it a *comparative happinesse.*

Some other scruples possibly may be *started*, but I want time now to *let slip* after them. Neither are they such (I suppose) but that a little *charity* yielding to the present *necessity*, will soon take them up, affording them a faire construction, and Resolution.

What then remains, but that this first branch of the *Exhortation* should take place with every of us, that wee would all of us *Ioyn our selves to the Lord this day in a Covenant, in this Covenant*, the maine drift and scope whereof the *Preface* and *Introduction* to it will assure you, is, *The Glory of God, the advancement of the Kingdome of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ, the Honour and Happinesse of the kings Majesty, and his Posteritie, the true publick libertie, safetie and peace of the kingdom.*

And *striking* this Covenant with God, Let us then (in the second place) be exhorted to be *mindfull of it*. So the Psalmist presseth it upon all the Lords People, 1 *Chron.* 16. *Be yee always mindful of his Covenant*. None of us here present but have made a Covenant with our God. Upon our *admission* into the Church to be *visible members* of it, we entred this Covenant, the summe whereof is (as I told you) that *hee should be our God, and we would be his People.* This Covenant many of us, (most of us I suppose) have *ratified* and *confirmed* in our receiving of the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*. Happily some of us (many of us) have upon occasion *renewed* this Covenant. It may be in some speciall *distresse*, or upon the receiving of some speciall *mercie*, wee have laid *new ingagements* upon our souls, binding them with *new cords*, new *Vows*, new *Resolutions*. And this is the service which this day our *God* by the *hand of Authority* cals us unto. O let us not then be unmindfull of this Covenant. Take wee heed of *forgetting* it. It is that which *Moses* chargeth upon the people, *Deut.* 4.

Vse.

1 Chron. 16. 15.

Take

Deut. 4. 23. *Take heed unto your selves lest ye forget the Covenant of the Lord your God.* A *Caveat* very *necessary*; this being a thing which we are very *subject to forget*; and the *forgetfulnesse thereof being of dangerous consequence.*

1 *Subject we are to forget it.* As for *our Covenants with men*, we easily remember them; especially if they make for our *advantage.* But this our Covenant with God, (though most *advantageous* to us, all the advantage being ours; God is no ways advantaged by our Covenants; They are neither, *Honour* nor *Profit* to him, both to us. That we may be confederated with the great God of heaven and earth, what an *Honour?* And that we may be interested in all the *promises* of this life, and a better, what a *Benefit?* yet (for all this) how subject are we to forget it? An *infirmity* which we have drawn from the loyns of our *first parents.* They being placed in *Paradice*, in state of *Innocencie*, yet how soon did they forget the *Covenant* of the Lord their God? This are we much more subject to. A truth which *experience* will make good to every ones soule. Those Vows and Covenants which some of us have made with our God in time of *distresse* and *trouble*, how soon are they forgotten? Not unlike *Seamens vows*, which in a *streese* at Sea they make freely, but no sooner come a *shore* but they forget all. Such are our *Vows* and *Covenants* for the most part which we make in our distresses; Not *Covenants of Salt*, (such was Gods Covenant with *Levi*, and such should his peoples Covenants be with him, *Covenants for perpetuitie*) but rather *Covenants of Snow*, which as soon as ever the *Sun shines* upon them they presently *melt* and *vanish* away. This forgetfulnesse we are very subject to, and therefore great need of this *Caveat*, *Take heed least we forget the Covenant of our God.*

Numb. 18.19.

2 The *Forgetfulnesse* whereof (in the second place) is of such *dangerous consequence.* An *inlet* to all *Evils*, and that both of

of *Sin* and *Punishment*. See both in our *first parents*. They forgetting the Covenant made with their God, and so venturing upon the eating of the *forbidden fruit* (a *seale* of that Covenant) they thereby let in all those evills which have overrun and drowned all their posterity; even a deluge of *sin* and *misrie*.

1. No such an *inlet to evils of sin* as this. Whence is it that *Christians*, (I mean *nominall* Christians) they dare let loose the reyns to licentiousnesse, yielding up themselves *servants* to *sin* and *Satan* in the obeying and fulfilling of divers inordinate Lusts, in adventuring upon *fowle*, and (it may be) *scandalous* evils? Certainly they have forgotten the *Covenant*, of their God. It is that which the wise man sayes of the *Adulterous woman*, *Prov.* 2. *She forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the Covenant of her God*. The latter a Reason of the former. *She forsaketh the guide of her youth*. giveth over herselfe to adulterous loves, and inchast imbraces of strangers. Why? Shee hath *forgotten the Covenant of her God*; that is, her *coniugall vow*, and promise made in the presence of God. And whence is it (my brethren) that our *hearts* generally are so ready to run out inordinately after the *Creatures*, bestowing those affections upon them which wee owe peculiarly to *God* and *Iesus Christ*? Surely we have *forgot*; at least do not, as we ought, *remember* the Covenant of the Lord our God, wherein we have ingaged our selves to take him for *our God*, to set him up in our *hearts*, to *love* him, *feare* him, *honour* him, *trust* in him above all other things. *Pro.* 2. 16 17.

2. *No such an inlet to the Evils of Punishment*. For this cause it is that God threatens his people with the *sword* (of temporall judgements the worst) *I will bring a sword upon you that shall evenge the quarrell of my Covenant*. What was the *Quarrell* of his *Covenant*? Why they had *forgotten* it, and forgetting had *violated* it. This lets in the sword, and with it *Pestilence*, and *Levit.* 26 25.

and *Famine*, as attendants upon it, (as it followeth in the next words.) Of such dangerous consequence is it to *forget* this Covenant which we have made.

On the other hand, the *Remembrance* of it is of great use. Usefull in *restraining* us from *sin*; Usefull in *putting* us on to *duty*. In the one a *Bridle*, in the other a *Spur*; both ways very usefull.

And therefore (in the fear of God) give way also to this second branch of the Exhortation. *Remember yee the Covenant of the Lord your God.* This it is that the Lord here in the Text putteth his people in minde of, giving them a hint of the *Covenant* which they had forgotten, that being *put in minde* of it, they would be *faithfull* in it, not thinking that *Ceremonies*, and *Sacrifices*, and those externall observances would serve the turn, but that they would apply themselves to performe the *Conditions* of the Covenant.

Vse 3. And this let every of vs (in the third and last place) be excited to doe. So *Remember* wee the Covenant of our God, that we may be *faithfull in it*. Faithfull in *performing the conditions* of our part; the summe whereof is bound up in this one word, *Obedience*.

True it is indeed, when we have done all we can do, yet we shall fall short of that *exactnes* of Obedience, which the Law requireth; there will be many *failings*, many *infirmities*. But let not these discourage; knowing this for our comfort, that these failings, where they are not *allowed*, but *bewailed*, and striven against, they are not properly a *breach* of this Covenant. The Covenant that Gods Saints are under (being in Christ) it is not a Covenant of *Works*, but a Covenant of *Grace*. In the first Covenant the condition of our parts was, an *exact* and *perfect obedience*, so as the least failing, the least deviation or swerving from the *Rule* was a breach of that Covenāt. But this Covenant it is established upon *better promises*, and

and *better conditions*; the Lord herein requiring from us not *Exactneſſe* but *Truth, Sincerity, Uprightneſſe. Walk before me, and be upright.* So as every *failing*, every *ſtraying* from the *Rule* is not a *Breach* of Covenant, ſo long as the *heart* is *upright* with God, not allowing it ſelf in any known evill, any ſinfull *Commiſſion*, or *Omiſſion*. Theſe are the *breaches* of this Covenant when the heart ſhall *ſit looſe* from God, taking in any ſinfull luſts to give entertainment to them. And this take we heed of. How ever there may be, and will be many ſlips, many failings in our courſe, yet take heed of ſins againſt *Light*, againſt *Conſcience*. Take heed of letting in, and ſetting up any ſinfull luſt in our hearts againſt the *Convictions* of the *Word*. This were indeed to deal *falſly* with God in his Covenant. A *Crime* which the *Church* waſheth her hands of, *Pſal.* 44. *All this is come upon us, yet have We not dealt falſly in thy Covenant.* *Pſal.*44. 17. At that time the Church lay under great preſſures, great afflictions. *All this is come upon us*, All theſe *evils*, theſe *ſufferings*. Yet ſhe profeſſeth her *integrity*. *She had not dealt falſly in the Covenant.* What is that? The next words explaine it. *Our heart is not turned back, neither have our ſteps declined from thy way.* This it is to deal *falſly* in the Covenant. When a mans *heart is turned back*, and thereupon his *ſteps decline* from the way of Gods Commandements, ſo as hee walketh on in any ſinfull way. O (my Brethren) let it not be layed to the charge of any of us, that we ſhould thus deal *falſly* in the Covenant of our God. And therefore, though *perfect* wee cannot be, yet labour we to be *upright* and *ſincere*. Let not our hearts be turned back from our God, but let us walke before him in the *conſtant, and conſcionable endeavour of an univerſall obedience.* Gen. 17. 2. *Verſe* 18

Thus *remembring* and *keeping* our Covenant with God, now be we aſſured, *that God will remember* his Covenant with us. *He remembreth his Covenant for ever*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt in that 105 Pſalme, which Text if we compare with the forenamed *Pſ.*105. 8.

1 Chron. 15. place. 1 *Chron.* 16. where the former part of this Pſalme is recorded, and from whence it is taken, wee may take notice of an obſervable difference in the reading of this paſſage. In the Pſalme, the words run in the *third* perſon, as ſpoken of *God*, *He remembreth*. In the *Chronicles* you have them in the *ſecond* perſon, as ſpoken to his *People*. *Remember yee*. Put them together, they will afford us this uſefull obſervation. That *if we Remember our Covenant with God, God will remember his Covenant with us; And becauſe he Remembreth his Covenant for ever, therefore let us Remember it for ever*. Herein God for his part will not be forgetfull, unfaithfull. It is the firſt branch of *Solomons* prayer at the *Dedication of the Temple*. *O Lord God of Iſrael there is no God like unto thee, &c. Which keepeſt covenant and mercy to thy ſervants, that walke before thee with all their hearts*. Marke it. Though there may be many ſlips and failings in the walkings of Gods people, their foot may often tread awry, yet walking before God *with all their hearts*, in uprightneſſe and ſincerity, the Lord will *keep Covenant* with them, and *ſhew mercy* to them in *pardoning* their ſins, *accepting* their ſervices, *healing* their infirmities *ſupplying* their wants; *performing* unto them all the *conditions* of the Covenant on his part. *What he hath ſpoken with his mouth, he will performe it with his hand* (as it followeth in the next Verſe.). And therefore let all our care and ſolicitude be, how to performe the Conditions on our part. How we may keep cloſe to God, and walk before him. *Walk before me and be upright*. This is that which wee have bound our ſelves to by *Baptiſme*, and confirmed in the *Lords Supper*. And this is one main thing which wee are now to engage our ſelves unto in *this Covenant* which wee are now to enter. So much you ſhall finde in the Cloſe of it, the *laſt Article*, (which you may obſerve to be ſet forth in a *different Character*, (as I conceive it) purpoſely to ſet a *note of obſervation* upon it,) the ſumme whereof is *Perſonall Reformation*, the Reformation of our owne *Hearts*, *Lives*, *Families*. Now every

2 Chron. 6. 14.

Verſe 15.

of

of us (in the fear of God) have a speciall eye upon this, looking upon it in the *first* place, though here set *last*, beginning our practice, where the Covenant ends (as it is the Rule of *Genesis*, and *Analysis*). Every one beginning at and with himself, each one *indeavouring* (as the words of the Article run) *to goe before another in the example of a reall Reformation.* Having practiled upon *our selves* first; our owne *Hearts, Lives, Families*; Then be we, as we may, all of us in our places, and according to the opportunities offered us, subservient unto the *Publick* indevouring to promote the great work of a *Publick Reformation* of what is amisse in *Church*, or *State*; which wee are to doe, all of us by our *Prayers*; those that have abilities, by their *Purses*; those which are called to it, by their *Counsels*; *Magistrates* by their *Authority*, *Ministers* by their *Doctrine*; *People* by their *Obedience*. This doe we for the *generall*.

Withall, having an eye to the severall *particulars* contained in this Covenant, which may any wayes conduce unto that great and blessed end, the *establishment* of the *true Religion* of God amongst us, with the *restoring* and *setling* of a true *peace*, and *happinesse* both in *Church* and *State*.

And to that end let mee direct your eyes to three or foure particulars of great consequence, tending directly to that end. You find them altogether in foure words of the second *Article*, where we engage our selves to endeavour the extirpation (as of *Papery* and *Prelacy*) two things obvious to every eye;) so, of *Vsurpation*, *Heresie*, *Schisme*, *Profaneness*. Foure words of great importance. Happily some of you do not so cleerly understand the meaning of some of them. Give mee leave to touch upon them a little, that you may both know *them*, and your *duty* concerning them.

1 *Superstition*, *wil-worship*, when men shall worship God by ways, and meanes of their owne devising; establishing their *owne Traditions*, *Teaching for Doctrines the commandments of men*: *Mat.* 15. 3, 6, 9.

Introducing *humane Inventions* into the Room of *Divine Ordinance*, making them either *Pars* or *Medium*, a *Part* or *Means* of *Divine Worship*. *Teaching*, or *practizing the fear of God by the precepts of men*. This is *Superstition*, whereof what ever relicks may be found amongst us, and evidenced to be such, we all stand obliged by vertue of this Covenant to seeke and indeavour by lawfull ways and meanes the *Abolition* and *Extirpation* of them.

Isa. 29.13

The second and third wee may put them together (being neer akin, *Cosen German*;) *Heresie* and *Schisme*: The one an errour in *Judgement*, the other in *Practice*.

6 *Heresie. An erroneous opinion touching some Article and principle of the Christian Faith, obstinately maintained against the evidence of the word.* This is properly *Heresie* to which there are these three things required. 1. It must be an errour *about some Article of Christian faith*, which is either *of* or *neer* the foundation. 2. It must be an errour *evident to bee such by the light of the Scriptures, and generall consent of the Churches*. 3. It must be an errour *obstinately maintained* and pertinaciously held *after conviction* and *lawfull admonition*. Put these together they make up *formall* Heresie, Heresie properly so called. An *evill weed*, not to be suffered in the Garden of God. One of those *workes of the flesh* which Saint *Paul* speaketh of, *Gal.* 5. *The workes of the flesh are Heresies*. Of dangerous consequence, pernitious, not only to the *person* tainted with it, but to the *Church* wherein it is tollerated. An infectious evill *spreading Gangrene* of a diffusive nature, very apt to spread and communicate it selfe, insinuating it selfe into the breasts and bosomes of men, for the most part, by way of fair and smooth *pretences* and *enticements*. The *Whore of Babylons* Cup wherein shee giveth her poyson to drinke, is a *Golden Cup*. In this respect (amongst others) it is that *Heresie* is elsewhere in the *Revelation* compared to *whordome*, *Revel.* 14. *Those which follow the Lambe*,

Gal. 5.20.

Rev. 7.4.

(the

(the true professors of the Gospel) they are said to be such as *were not defiled with women, for they are Virgins.* The simplicity and purity of the *Orthodox faith*, that is *virginity*. *Heresie* is *whordome*; A secretly enticing, subtilely seducing evill; conveying it selfe (as *poysons* for the most part are) with some *sweete mixtures*, the mixtures of some sweet and precious *truths*. And surely such are some of those *Errours* which fly abroad in the world at this day. That (amongst other) of *Antinomianisme*, which under a colour of *exalting of Christ*, & *setting up free grace* (the most glorious pretext in the world) trample upon *Moses*, beating downe the *Law*, that Law which *Christ* came to establish, not allowing it any *directive* power, to be so much as a *Rule of our obedience*, withall, taking away all *sense* and *conscience* of *sin* (as sin) in the *Regenerate*, An *Heresie* of that dangerous consequence, that unlesse it be extirpated, and rooted out, it will endanger the eating out the *heart*, and *bowels* of all true *Religion*. *Rev.* 14.4

3 *Schisme*. The word signifieth a *Rending*, a *taring*, (σχισμα, a σχιζω) and it is nothing but a *Rending and taring of the Unity of the Church*. As when men shall make *divisions*, and *factions* in a Church, breaking it into pieces, and parts. Such were those *Schismes* in the Church of *Corinth*, (to the Apostle calleth them, *I beseech you brethren that there be no divisions amongst you*: 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. σχισματα, (saith the Originall,) *Schismes*) where some were followers of *Paul*, others of *Apollos*, a third of *Cephas*, a fourth of *Christ*; so breaking the unitie of that *body*, that *Church*. Or when any shall *seperate* from Communion with a true Church. Such a *Seperation* (saith our Learned Doctor *Ames*) *by a speciall appropriation most rightly deserves the name of Schisme*. 1 *Cor.* 11. 10, 11, 12. *Ames Cas.*

Which yet must be warily and tenderly understood. Not that every *withdrawing* from some particular *act*, or *acts* of Communion with a Church, wherein men conceive that they

they cannot participate without sin, should be presently called, and accounted a *Schisme*. It was the Case of many of late times in the point of *Kneeling* at the Sacrament: They durst not hold communion with the Church in that particular *act*, because of that *Gesture*, about which they were not satisfied. This *partiall*, and *peaceable*, withdrawing, meerly out of *tenderuesse of Conscience*, cannot properly be called *Schisme*, so long as the *Church* is still *owned* and *acknowledged*, and communion held with it in the *mayn*. But, where there is a *totalis secessio*, a *totall departure* and *Seperation*, an absolute renouncing and rejecting of all Fellowship and Communion with a Church, a *true Church*, and that upon this ground, because they adjudge it to be *no Church*, or an *imperfect* and *defective* Church; defective in her *Constitution*, or *Administrations*, and *Ordinances*, Certainly, if there be any *Schisme* in the world this is *Schisme*, and that most properly so called.

An *evil weed* also, no lesse dangerous then the former. Some comparing them together, *Heresie and Schisme*, have aggravated this above the other, as conceiving it to be the more dangerous of the two.

Muscul. loc. Com.

And surely dangerous it is, not onely to the *person* himselfe who maketh this Schisme, who hereby

1 *Excommunicates himself*, cuts off himself from Fellowship, and Communion with the Church and People of God; depriving himself of *Church-Priviledges*, as also of the *publick Ordinances*, the means of his *Edification* and *salvation*, to which God hath promised a *speciall concurrence*.

2 Besides, *running out of the fold*, hee thereby exposeth himself to the *Wolfe*. And hence it is that those which have made such a totall *secession*, and *seperation*, they seldom stay there, but are carried on to further and more dangerous errours, as to grosse *Anabaptisme*, and *Familisme*, and what not?

3 But dangerous also the *Committie*, to the *Body of the* Church

Church, which by this means is rent and torn, and *diſmembred*. Which what it is to the *Naturall body*, what *danger*, and what *Torment*, they which have felt it, can tell. I wiſh they which ſtand guiltie of this evill were but as apprehenſive and ſenſible of what it is to the *myſticall body*, how *detrimentall*, how *dangerous*: What it is thus to *divide Chriſt*; thus to *deſpiſe and contemne the Church of God*, (*or deſpiſe yee the Church of God?* ſaith *Paul* to ſome of his *Corinthians*); A thing of ſadder Conſequence, then I believe it is generally apprehended by moſt of thoſe, who upon every ſlight diſlike, preſently fall to *Partiall*, and from Partiall to *Totall Seperation*. The Lord heal theſe breaches. 1 *Cor.* 11. 22.

In the mean time, who ever they are that have taken, or ſhall take this *Covenant*, let them take notice, how by vertue hereof they ſtand ingaged to endeavour the *Extirpation* of both theſe *evill weeds*, *Hereſie*, and *Schiſme*. A *charge* which as it lyeth upon all, ſo after eſpeciall manner upon *publike Perſons*, *Magiſtrates* and *Miniſters*. If *wee* then ſpeake againſt both the one and the other, you muſt beare with us; It is no more then we are bound to do. And if you that have *Authority* in your hands, do not improve it; for the ſuppreſſing, and eradicating of both, ſee you to it, for my part I doe not ſee how you can be acquitted of this *Oath*, wherein the obligation is ſo expreſt, that you ſhall endeavour the extirpation as of *Hereſie*, ſo of *Schiſme*.

4. The fourth and laſt is *Prophaneneſſe*. A bitter and poyſenous weed. *A Roote that beareth Gall and Wormewood* (as you have it deſcribed, *Deut.* 29.) Such a *Roote* none will ſuffer to grow in their *Gardens*, much leſſe God in his. O let it bee the joynt endeavour of all and every of us to pull it up, to roote it out, *Private* perſons, every one roote it out of his own, *Heart*, *Mouth*, *Life*. *Parents* and *Maſters* roote it out their *Deut.* 29 18.

Fa-

Families, not suffering it to grow within their *walls*. Every one taking up *Davids* and *Joshuahs* resolution. *He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house, hee that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight, Psal.* 101. *As for me and my house wee will serve the Lord. Josh.* last. *Ministers* endeavour to root it out of their *Congregations*, laying the *Axe* of the Word to the *Root* of it. *Magistrates* to root it out of their *Jurisdictions*, and that by a *due execution* of the *Laws* upon publick offendours. Such Laws you have divers; Laws against *Swearing*, against *Drunkennesse*, against *Sabboth-breaking*, &c. all branches of the same Root, *Profanenesse*. Now take ye notice of it, that this *Covenant* bindeth you to a more strict, and impartiall execution of those Laws, then ever heretofore. Thus joining together, *Word*, and *Sword*, *Ministers* and *Magistrates*, there may be some hope of extirpating of this *bitter and deadly weed*, which hath *overrun* and almost overspread the whole *Garden of God*, being so rife in every *City*, every *Town*: And that that being extirpated, and rooted out; *Piety* and *true Religion* may come to put up head, and flourish. Which let it be the *Joynt desire*, and *mayn Designe* of every one that either hath, or shall joyn himself to the Lord in *this Covenant*.

Ps. 101. 7
Ios. 24. 15

FINIS.

10

The L. Fairfaxes victory at Selby, and an exact List of the Commanders and Officers taken there.
The suppression of Mr Huntley's insurrection in Scotland.
The full relation of the proceedings against the Archb. of Canterbury.

Numb. 47

Sir Thomas Fairfax.

Mercurius Civicus.
LONDONS
INTELLIGENCER.
OR,
Truth impartially related from thence to the whole Kingdome, to prevent mis-information.

From Thursday April 11. to Thursday April 18. 1644.

OUr last and certaine news from Yorkshire deserves the first place in this Intelligence, which as it was informed by a speciall Messenger sent from Sir *Thomas Fairfax* to the Parliament on Wednesday last April 17. it followeth: that upon the advance of the Lord *Fairfax* from Hull, with 20 Troops of Horse on Friday was sevennight last he joyned with Sir *Tho. Fairfax* and Col. *Lambert*,